

CRADLE OF HOPE

SITE VISIT PROGRAMMATIC QUESTIONS - RESPONSE
MDH - POSITIVE ALTERNATIVES 2016 – JUNE 3, 2016

1. Update/ Demographic Reporting

- Review your two most recently submitted Update/Demographic Reports: are you meeting Report Count Goals?

Cradle of Hope (COH) exceeded their Report Count Goals for cribs each quarter, however, please note that during the 7th quarter they exhausted their funding for cribs so these numbers appear low. COH has more than doubled their Report Count Goals for rental assistance each quarter.

- Note any significant differences between the reports: are your programs stable? Improving? What do the reports indicate about progress in your programs?

COH is receiving two times as many applications for rental assistance and for higher dollar amounts. Their agency is financially stable to meet the needs of those they currently serve. However, COH is striving to reach out to more areas which will increase their applications and also increase the amount of funds needed. Therefore, COH continues to seek out various funding streams to be able to account for this increased need.

- Any questions on the recording of data on either form? **No**

2. Work Plan

- Review your 2012-16 grant application's description of the program you requested to be funded. Note the services and activities you said you would provide and the number of clients you would serve.

From 2012 – 2016, Cradle of Hope requested funding from the MN Department of Health Positive Alternatives to serve approximately 1,000 women throughout the state of MN each year. \$180,000 would be used to provide approximately 360 women with housing assistance and \$90,000 would be used to distribute approximately 1,200 portable cribs. Cradle of Hope is a state-wide agency that organizes the distribution of portable cribs (pack n plays) and provide rental assistance by partnering with agencies throughout MN who work directly with clients.

CRADLE OF HOPE

SITE VISIT PROGRAMMATIC QUESTIONS - RESPONSE
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- Please prepare a **short summary of your current program(s) and the number of clients being served.** Address these topics:
 - a. How does what you describe in the application compare with what you are currently providing?

COH continues to provide housing assistance and portable cribs to those in need throughout MN. They have spent a great deal of time strengthening their relationships with partnering agencies throughout MN and establishing more partnerships. Through these partnerships they have realized that not only is more assistance needed but a variety of assistance as well. Therefore, COH has been meeting to determine what they are capable of providing and how to achieve these goals.
 - b. Have any programs and/or activities or services been added or removed?

No, not at this time. They do have plans to add services in the future.
 - c. Have the number of clients being served per quarter decreased or increased in the 4th year?

COH has exhausted all PA funds in the last quarter of the last year so their last quarter numbers appear lower. However, the need is still great and numbers have increased each quarter prior. As they continue to focus their efforts on expanding to areas throughout MN that have limited resources, they anticipate numbers will double, if not increase by more.
 - d. Is there anything in particular you want to share about your current program to explain its current status?

Cradle of Hope is currently the only agency in MN to partner with multiple agencies throughout MN to distribute portable cribs and safe slumber information to prevent SIDS and infant mortality. They are striving to reach the minority populations where infant mortality rates are not declining as readily and hope to enable all MN residents with easier access to Cradle of Hope services. They have heard from their partnering agencies and have taken the necessary steps to create a new application and application process which is much easier and less judgmental. They hope this will also make it easier to partner with even more agencies throughout MN. In January 2016, staffing has changed at Cradle of Hope from limited part time staff to two full time dedicated staff who are more readily available and who can communicate better with our partnering agencies.

CRADLE OF HOPE

SITE VISIT PROGRAMMATIC QUESTIONS - RESPONSE MDH - POSITIVE ALTERNATIVES 2016 – JUNE 3, 2016

3. Fiscal Review

- Review of the 2015-16 expenditures spreadsheet sent by Ellen Heit. **No questions.**
- Have you revised your 2015-16 budget justification? **COH has not required any revisions during this fiscal year and are in line with their current budget.**
- Any questions on your completion of the 2014-16 grant and your budget? **COH has exhausted all funding and will be submitting their last invoice as well as the evaluation report on time. If any new funds become available, they could immediately use them.**

4. Do you have any questions on the findings from your **Financial Reconciliation**? **No**

5. Grant Closeout Form

- You will have an opportunity to review a draft of the Grant Closeout Form.

6. 2015-16 Evaluation - Due June 10th

- Your 2015-16 Evaluation Plan will be discussed. Any suggestions provided in your 2013-14 Report Summary should be included in the plan, if you are continuing the same evaluation.

The current 2015-16 Evaluation Plan does not continue or build upon any research from past evaluation plans. The current evaluation focuses on increasing our partnering agencies located in the Greater MN area by at least 10%. They are specifically targeting potential partners with Native American populations such as reservations.

- Any questions on the expectations of the report or your organization's evaluation plan for 2015-16? **Not at this time.**

7. Positive Alternatives website

- The PA website will be reconfigured once contracts are all signed.
- Resources for grantees will remain basically the same.
- WRTK booklet revisions have not yet been completed.

Both the PA website page and the WRTK booklet are still a work in progress.

8. Grant Manager Updates

Current budgets are for 2 year cycles. Keep in mind the new 2016-19 grant cycle will have grant cycles that are for one year. All PA policies are currently being updated and revised. The updated policies will be sent to all new grantees at the beginning of the

CRADLE OF HOPE

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new grant cycle. A Webinar training will be offering via WebEx on Thursday, July 14 in the morning. More information will be sent soon. All grantee staff working with the administration of the PA grant are encouraged to attend the Webinar.

9. Issues specific to this grantee

Main issues discussed with this grantee include funding for future programming covering the needs of the all COH partners and their new website development for their online application process. Access for all women in need of a safe sleep environment with a COH pack n play was also discussed with the idea that no one should be denied this service if there is a need requested.

10. Facility

- If your facility has been remodeled or updated please give an update. Do you have any plans to move your organization to another building in the near future? **Yes.** As COH expands their service area and scope of services, they hope to move to their own facility instead of a shared space. They are currently in the research and planning stages.
- If grant-funded activity areas have been significantly altered, be prepared to discuss. **Grant funded activities for this grant cycle have not changed.** However, during the next grant cycle (2016-2019) they do have plans to increase existing services as well as add additional services and resources including a new website and online access to their application.

11. Health Equity is a priority goal at the Minnesota Department of Health. How is your organization addressing this need?

Cradle of Hope has listened to the voices of those they serve and partner with to implement necessary positive changes in our current practices and operations. Cradle of Hope currently helps to address infant mortality by distributing portable cribs to those in need throughout the state of MN. Since residential instability leads to poor performance in schools and higher drop-out rates, Cradle of Hope provides housing assistance so families can reside in their homes and provide the stability needed for educational growth and success.

It is their intention to expand their service area and scope of services that will address several health inequities affecting many populations in MN. They intend to reach out to those living in more remote areas or with little access to assistance. COH also hopes to establish partnerships with the Native American populations throughout the state. As they strengthen their existing services, they also hope to expand what is

CRADLE OF HOPE

SITE VISIT PROGRAMMATIC QUESTIONS - RESPONSE MDH - POSITIVE ALTERNATIVES 2016 – JUNE 3, 2016

being offered. With the launch of a new Cradle of Hope website and online access to their application, they will also provide information and access to the following:

- All types of assistance they will provide. Financial Assistance (rent/mortgage, utility bills, medical bills, child care) and Material Assistance (portable cribs, monthly transportation cards, wellness baskets).
- Online Resources (employment, education, parenting).

COH believes that their actions as well as making a concerted effort to target multiple populations and areas through the state of MN, will help address the following health inequities:

- Infant Mortality Rates
- Poverty Rates
- Unemployment
- Residential Instability
- High School Graduation rates

12. What are the new **unaddressed needs in the communities you serve?**

- Do you have a well-developed and up-to-date list of community partners available? **Yes.** A list of partnering agencies they collaborate with regularly was provided. However, please note that COH has assisted clients from over 200 agencies throughout MN over the years.
- Are you able to make warm referrals to any of these partners? **This past January (2016), Cradle of Hope made significant staffing changes which had a tremendously positive effect on their agency. COH made a concerted effort to reach out to their partnering agencies (approximately 50 thus far) to re-establish relationships with them, receive feedback about concerns they had, and to determine how they can be of more help to their partners moving forward. All of their agencies agreed that there is still a need for the following assistance: rental assistance, utility bills, medical bills, child care costs, transportation expenses (specifically metro transit passes), and portable cribs. COH continues to get to know their partnering agencies better and have already responded to some of their needs such as creating an easier, non-judgmental application and application process. COH has received a very positive response and because of these efforts, they are confident in their partnerships and ability to make warm referrals to these agencies as needed.**

13. Clients stories (along with client data collection) are an important component of the work we do. Client stories fill in the gaps that data can't detail and humanize the efforts made by all grantees.

CRADLE OF HOPE

SITE VISIT PROGRAMMATIC QUESTIONS - RESPONSE
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- **Have you submitted your PA funded client stories yet?**
A client story has been submitted. Thank you.

14. Other

COH is a non-profit voluntary agency that provides a safe sleep environment by providing pack n plays to women in need throughout the entire state of Minnesota. They also provide rental assistance for women in unplanned or crisis pregnancy situations to support their decision to parent their child. These services are provided at no cost to their partner organizations statewide that currently number approximately fifty. COH has been a PA grantee that has offered these services statewide with the assistance of limited staff and volunteers. They have recently hired 2 full time staff and are in the process of reviewing and updating their entire program. Their newly implemented changes will be welcome by their partner organizations. COH's commitment to their continuing mission and their PA funding is exemplary.

Date: June 6, 2016

Grantee: Cradle of Hope

Grantee staff: Darlene Kopesky, Brittany Wiese

Grant Manager: Mary Ottman